3. Institute Fellowship for M.Sc. student-Rs. 3200/-per month (fixed)

4. Institute Fellowship for Ph.D. student-Rs. 4400/- per month (fixed)

Some of the scholars get fellowship of varied amount from organizations other than ICAR.

(e) There is no proposal to introduce differential rates for ladies and men in research scholarships.

(f) Question does not arise, Sir.

Central assistance for debt relief to farmers

1780. SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of peasants who caught in debt trap have committed suicide in Kerala;

(b) whether Kerala Government has sought any Central assistance for providing relief to such farmers;

(c) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of Government thereto; and

(d) whether Government would consider to waive agricultural loan upto the tune of 50,000 and interest of loan, extend moratorium for recovery of loan announced by RBI upto three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) The State Government of Kerala in its memorandum submitted to Government of India on 26th July, 2004 have stated that 48 cases of farmers's suicide due to crop failures and indebtedness were reported from Wayanad district.

(b) and (c) The State Government of Kerala in its memorandum of July, 2004 have sought central assistance of Rs. 3847 crores for rehabilitation of farmers and revival of agriculture sector which includes Rs. 10 crore for providing relief to the families of the farmers who committed suicide. Government of India has decided to depute a Central team for on the spot assessment of the prevailing situation in the State.

(d) Based on the announcement made by the Government of India on 18th June, 2004, the banks have already been advised by RBI/ NABARD to extend following debt relief measures to the farmers:—

(a) Farmers in distress-Debts of farmers as on 31st March, 2004 in districts declared as calamity affected by the State Government concerned will be rescheduled/restructured which shall be repayable over a period of five years, at current interest rates, including an initial moratorium of two years.

(b) Farmers in arrears—Loans in default of famers who have become ineligible for fresh credit, as their earlier debts have been categorized as sub-standard or doubtful will be rescheduled so that such farmers become eligible for fresh credit.

(c) OTS for small and marginal farmers — The small and marginal farmers who have been declared defaulters and have become ineligible for availing institutional credit may be given relief including partial waiver of interest on loans under "One-Time Settlement (OTS) Scheme".

(d) Banks have been permitted to advance loans against appropriate collateral or group security to the farmers who are under heavy debt burden from non-institutional lenders so as to provide them relief from indebtedness.

Per capita Wheat and Rice availability

†1781. DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:
SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any downfall in the per-capita availiability of wheat and rice in the country since beginning of 90's till date;

(b) if so, the facts in this regard;

(c) whether it is a fact that agricultural production has been decreasing as compared to population growth in the above years in the country; and

(d) if so, the reaction of Government in this regard and whether in the above situation, promoting production of cash crops and contract farming could be a solution of overcoming starvation-related problems?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) The per-capita availibility of wheat

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.